**CSW66 Webinar Transcript – Opportunities for Feminist Foreign Policy in the Indo Pacific**

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Okay, everyone. I can see that a number of participants are joining the meeting, so I will maybe just get thumbs up on my team to say that we can proceed and go ahead. I will start. Welcome to this session. I would like to start by acknowledging that I'm joining you from the land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, and pay my respect to your elders past and present. It's really important, when talking about something like feminist foreign policy, to acknowledge the ongoing project of colonization, and the impact this has had on, and continue to has on First Nation people in Australia, as well as other countries in this region. Here in Australia, colonization has systematically devalued the knowledges and worldviews of First Nation people. And it is critical that feminist approaches be informed by and create space for this knowledge, and we'll have a chance to go into more depths around this today. Thank you all for joining us, and to explore with us the opportunities for feminist foreign policy in the Indo-Pacific. Please do introduce yourself in the chat, and let us know where you're joining us from today, and even what time it is for you. We know and acknowledge that CSW brings a lot of complexity around time zone, and including our panelists. Some of them have been up for 17 hours, so acknowledging their strength and power in joining us in this context. This session is co-hosted by IWDA and the Kubernein Initiative. IWDA is an Australian-based organization. We are resourcing women's rights organization in Asia and the Pacific, and we're working with global feminist movements to advance our vision of gender equality for all. Also, we are convening the Australian Feminist Foreign Policy Coalition, which is a diverse network of individuals and organization that are advancing feminist foreign policy in Australia. The Kubernein Initiative is an Indian-based organization that's exploring opportunities for more gender mainstreaming in Indian foreign policy, through research and through consultative processes. You'll hear directly from my colleague Priyanka Bhide in a moment. What I would like to do is to begin this session. Myself and Priyanka will each share about organization's work on feminist foreign policy. Once we've done that, that will help us have some scene-setting and some framing of our discussion. We will then hear from our panelists, who will dig deeper into the opportunities and the challenges for applying this approach into the Indo-Pacific region. And then, of course, we'll give some space for Q and A. We will be monitoring the Q and A function, so please post your question as we go along. You can start now, and we will monitor that. And so, we will have a dedicated time towards the end of our session to come to them. I'm going to ask my colleague, Alice, to share her screen now, as I take you through only about three slides. Bear with me; just as I said, wanting to make sure we have some good context setting. To frame the discussion, I'd like to share this definition that we have, that's developed with the Australian Feminist Foreign Policy Coalition, which is, "Feminist foreign policy is an approach which places gender equality at the central goal of foreign policy, in recognition that gender equality is a predictor of peaceful and flourishing societies." We know, globally, that gender equality is the most important factor in predicting peaceful societies, more important even than wealth and democracy. In this context, the context of this year's CSW theme, we also know that climate change and peace are inextricably linked. In the Pacific, the board declaration of the Pacific Island Forum actually identifies really clearly that climate change is the greatest security threat facing the region. We also know that climate impacts our gender, and climate-induced disasters lead to increases in sexual and gender-based violence, and increases in burden of unpaid care and domestic work for women. We also know decades of experiences in the women, peace and security agenda has shown us that we need women's leadership and meaningful participation in peace-building in all areas of public life. But we know that's not enough, if this is just a standalone. A feminist approach is about emphasizing what we need to transform the global system, which uphold and perpetrate inequality for women, for trans and gender diverse people, as well as inequality based on race, religion, and class, in order to create a peaceful world, where everyone can flourish. That next slide gives you a really brief timeline of feminist foreign policy across the world. There are nine countries now that have announced feminist foreign policies. Sweden were the first, pioneering the concept in 2014, followed in by Canada, France and Luxembourg. Mexico became the first global south country to make this commitment in 2020, and then Libya, the first African nation. In the past year alone, we've now seen Spain, Germany, and most recently, only about 10 days ago, Chile joined the group. While the interest in feminist foreign policy is growing each year, it's important to acknowledge it is still an emerging discipline, with each country taking its own approach to defining the principles it sees as critical to a feminist approach. Taking a step back; in 2019, we at IWDA partner with the International Center for Research on Women, and the NYU Center for Global Affairs, to hold a workshop at CSW, at the time we were able to be physically there, focused on hearing the voices of women in the global South. That workshop brought together 40 participants from 19 countries to discuss their priorities for the principles and accountability mechanism that should underpin feminist foreign policy. And so, on this slide, you see a takeaway of that. Basically, from this workshop, what emerges seven principles. You can see one obviously is about based on human rights, of course in terms of goal, the goal that it sets out to achieve, but also in the way a country goes about advancing that goal through its foreign policy. Advancing human rights. In advancing human rights, feminist foreign policy should also reinforce the role of the state as the ultimate duty-bearer, and should not elevate the market as a delivery mechanism, or outsource the provision of public goods and services to the private sector. That was very loudly heard from all those participants. Feminist foreign policy must also be transformative of the status quo. This means that any announcement of feminist foreign policy which is not followed by actually significant shifts in policy and in practice should be viewed as suspicious. It also means we need to remember that gender equality is not just about equality between men and women on an individual level. It's about actually transforming structures of inequality and marginalization, that perpetrating equality based on gender and other factors. You see, on the fourth principle, inclusive and intersectional, meaning it's not solely occupied, as I just mentioned, with gender, but with intersecting forms of marginalization, and recognizing marginalization that's perpetrated through colonialism, structural racism, capitalism and more. And so it must orientated in analyzing and disrupting power. Comprehensive and coherent. This recognize that advances in one area of feminist foreign policy can actually be undermining another, so we need coherence across domestic and foreign policy decision. You also see in number six; to promote a nonviolence and demilitarization. Policies and programs that should not exacerbate conflict or place civilian population at risk, and that they should not use violence as a tool to achieve policy outcomes; for example, through widespread sanction against entire population. And then, number seven, a self scrutiny and accountability to civil society, and those on the receiving end of foreign foreign policy, which identify both as a principle, but also as a mechanism for ensuring implementation, which leads me to speak to those three accountability mechanism that you can see also on that slide there. From human financial and legal resourcing and processes, like transparent and increasing planning in reporting, the workshop also notified the idea of transparent misalignment, and what that means is we live in an imperfect world. All policy decision will have some trade-offs, and it will take time, maybe years, to fully implement a feminist approach, so transparent misalignment was proposed and thought of as a way to ensure accountability on this journey. I will add a couple of things to this slide. We can remove the slide now. I'll just speak to the couple of additional points that, since this workshop in 2019, we've also identified a few more principles. The first is that feminist foreign policy is a framework which can help break down hierarchies and find continuum. An example of that is the breakdown of hierarchies between state security and human security. We can see investing in human security as a way to advance the overall security of states. And on the other side, we can actually critique approaches which sacrifice human security, people's basic needs and everyday safety, in the name of state security. That's an additional principle. What we also come to crystallize is that a feminist foreign policy breaks down hierarchies of knowledge. It revalue different ways of knowing and seeing the world. Again, this is critical in the context of climate change, where the dominant world view of extractive capitalism is doing so much damage. And so, we need to revalue indigenous world views and approaches, and we will dig into that into our session, and with our panel today. Another key principle that has also emerged since this work in 2019 is that gender equality is actually the outcome, and feminism here is the approach or the process. Feminist foreign policy isn't, or shouldn't be, something that you do to others. For a country adopting feminist foreign policy, it's a methodology to guide their own priorities and approach, and that might mean not using the word feminism or the word feminist in every single context, particularly in parts of the world where it has a neocolonial connotation. And actually we'll look forward to unpacking that particular point with the panel as well today. I'm going to pause there. Gave you some context and some framing, from the work that IWDA has done. Before we go to the panel, I'll now hand over to my colleague Priyanka at the Kubernein Initiative, who will share the work that Kubernein has done on analyzing different approaches to feminist foreign policy and gender mainstreaming. Priyanka, over to you.

**Priyanka Bhide:** Thank you very much, Bettina, and I must confess that we at Kubernein Initiative have relied very much on the fantastic work being done by IWDA and ICRW to build some of our research over here as well. I will just go over where we were coming from in our approach to the feminist foreign policy, and what we have learned from our conversations and research in India. The Indian perspective. Essentially, when we tuned into the global feminist foreign policy conversation almost now three years ago, there was no conversation happening in the Indian policy circles. This term was very new. What we found most interesting about the idea of a feminist foreign policy, which Bettina has already touched upon, was that it was transforming the decision-making structures, taking an intersectional approach, and including more diverse voices. It was also considering the human impact of policies, of foreign policies in diverse areas, including not just humanitarian aid, but also the environment, climate change, health, et cetera. We also found interesting, as Bettina has again mentioned, that the countries adopting such an approach were taking their own trajectories. They were deciding what the term would mean, what the concept would mean, and how it would play out within their own national context. For example, if we see Sweden, who was the first country to announce such a policy; they structure their feminist foreign policy around the Three Rs: rights, representation and resources. And a lot of their work was building on the women, peace and security work that they had been doing for several years. They also now have a feminist trade policy where, through greater analysis data and engaging with gender experts, they are looking at how trade agreements may benefit both men and women equally. Canada, they have a feminist international assistance policy. To use the term feminist itself, they went through, as we understood through our conversations, an intensive consultative process, to then come to the decision of using the term feminist. Mexico uses the term feminist to spur affirmative action, which they use in their external policy, but also then trying to connect it to some of their internal policies as well. And this integrating your external policy with the internal policy is a theme that several countries we found have tried to tackle in various ways. One of them is to have either an office or an entity that looks at policies across ministries, both internal external, to ensure that there's this gender lens. Sweden, France and Denmark has such an office or entity. Germany was another very interesting example for us, because they began with using the term gender, and only in the end of 2021 have they announced a feminist foreign policy. These different trajectories were, of course, very interesting to us, but we also noticed, in all of that, that the conversation was largely taking place in the trans-Atlantic space. There wasn't a lot of discussion happening in this side of the world. So, what we try to do through our work was to widen these circles of conversation, to engage with the foreign policy ecosystem, as well as the organizations working on gender within India, to understand what the perspective would be from India. We also conducted a fair amount of research before we began these consultations, and it was very encouraging for us to see that there was evidence of gender considerations in India's external action already in our humanitarian aid development partnerships and multilateral engagements. For example, we established the International Solar Alliance along with France in 2015, where the business models developed had a gender consideration. We established the Coalition for Disaster-Resilient Infrastructure in 2019, and have drawn a comprehensive national plan to fully achieve the Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction by 2030, and the Sendai framework, as we all know, emphasizes the role of women in managing, designing, resourcing and implementing effective plans and programs. The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Program, which has been in existence in 1964, has conducted several trainings, given grants, scholarships over the years, that have benefited women all over the world. For example, they have had the very successful Solar Grandmothers Program, through which grandmothers in remote areas are trained to look after the solar panels and structures that exist there. Basic engineering training, so that they might manage the solar energy within their villages, India also deployed the first ever all female police unit to the United Nations Mission in Liberia in 2007, followed by units to UN missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Republic of South Sudan. All of this was very encouraging to us. It made us realize that we didn't have to start from scratch, and we already had spaces where India could build on having such a gender mainstreaming policy, but through our consultations, we heard very strongly, something, again, that Bettina has touched upon, the reservation for the word feminist, because in our context, it's very often associated with a very Western term, or something that is that that relates to very radical activism. And so, there was some reservation on using the term feminist for such a policy, when it may take place. And of course, there was a need to take a more intersectional approach, where you're looking at gender not just in terms of the binaries, but also taking account considerations that are important from the Indian perspective, such as caste, class, religion, et cetera. This is a work in progress, and we are still having these conversations and developing what may be an Indian perspective, and where we may go from here and how long to take. I'm very excited now to give the anchoring of this event to Bettina and hear from the wonderful panelists that we have today.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you so much Priyanka. I will introduce our panelists now. And then, we will go into some questions I mentioned earlier. Sharanya Sekaram is an independent policy and advocacy consultant in gender. Based in Colombo, Sri Lanka, she's currently focused on gender-based violence, resourcing women and girls led organization and gender issues in humanitarian and emergency context, including with the Coalition of Feminists for Social Change as their advocacy communication consultant, and also with voice as their regional technical lead for South Asia. We also have Chandy Eng, who is the executive director of GADC, Gender and Development for Cambodia, a Cambodia nonprofit organization, focused on gender equality as human rights. Chandy manages GADC's work on leadership networks, campaign publication, fundraising and public forums to raise awareness on gender equality issues, and lobbies national level legislators and policy makers to incorporate gender principles into new and existing laws and policy. Nalini Singh is a feminist and a social development specialist with over 20 years experience in design, implementation, management, monitoring, and evaluation of women's rights and development program in Asia Pacific. With a passion for women's human's rights and gender equality driving her work, her particular interest is in the issues of women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, decent work and organizational capacity strengthening. And then finally, James Blackwell is a proud Wiradjuri man and research fellow in indigenous diplomacies at the ANU Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs. His work centers on conceptualizing First Nation foreign policy approaches in the 21st century, as well as the greater inclusion of First Nation voices with governance system. Thank you so much for joining us, panelists. I will go to Sharanya first, and that's because we've talked earlier about the connection between gender and peace, and you've written about the importance of feminist foreign policy in post-conflict context, like Sri Lanka, and the way that women who experience freedom from gender norms during conflict have actually been put back into these rigid roles in the post-conflict rehabilitation process. Could you tell us about this, and how you think a feminist approach could change the way we approach peace-building?

**Sharanya Sekaram:** Thank you so much, Bettina. It's an absolute pleasure. Thank you for having me here today. I think there are two key points I want to make in response to your question, which I think will help also frame some of these conversations we're having around the importance of feminist foreign policy, particularly in a conflict setting. The first is that, perhaps I call it a personal frustration of mine, is often how watered down the idea of feminism has become in a very pop culture era. And it's been reduced down to, "Feminism is about equality," which is like saying the ocean is water that's wet. It's true, but it does not capture the vastness, the breadth and the nuance that is necessary to understand what being feminist and what taking a feminist approach needs. I want to start there, which is to say that, to be feminist also is to not just look at issues on an individual scale, but to address systemic structural and institutional inequality, and how that manifests. That's the first point I want to make about feminist foreign policy and its importance, is that it recognizes where system structures and institutions have perpetrated inequality, perpetrated violence, oppression, and doesn't reduce it down to a generational, even one generation of solving problems. It takes such a longterm deconstruction, reconstructing and reconstructive approach. The second point I want to make brings in from that, and I'm going to use the example of Sri Lanka to underlie what I'm talking about, is that, as you said, in conflict, what happens is everything becomes upended. And conflict also is born out of systemic oppression and violence. That is often where the roots of conflict come from. When we apply a feminist foreign policy approach, we are able to recognize those two very fundamental underpinnings. And now, in Sri Lanka, for example, as you said, what happened post-conflict was that women, particularly women who had joined the conflict as rebel fighters, and I'm speaking specifically also about the LTT. Many of them joined in order to escape the rigid gender roles that they were subject to within their community. They were joining not only because they believed in the cause, but they also, as women wanted to break free from being wives, daughters, mothers, and these picked roles. When you go and put them right back into those roles, you are not actually addressing why they joined in the first place. You're not understanding that men and women have different reasons for joining, and different reasons for being a part. You're treating everybody as this homogenous group. And that's the beauty also of bringing a feminist approach. As you said, it's an intersectional approach. Feminism is intersectional, and we recognize that our identities don't operate in silos. They exist together. How do you stop treating people and groups as homogenous and begin to unpack the layers and nuance? And for me, those are really the two fundamental underpinnings that a feminist foreign policy approach brings, that other approaches haven't, and fail to address.

- Thank you. Thank you so much, Sharanya. I think we talked earlier about hierarchies of knowledge, different ways of seeing the world. James, I will come to you here, because part of a feminist foreign policy approach is breaking down hierarchies of knowledge, and your work focuses on First Nation approaches to foreign policy. Can you explain to us what this looks like, and why it's important to include, as part of a feminist foreign policy, both generally, but also for First Nation communities.

**James Blackwell:** Yeah. Thanks, Bettina. And obviously, thanks for having me here at this event. Just want to acknowledge also, I'm coming from Ngunnawal Country here in Canberra, and I respect their ancestors and elders here. Look, I think including First Nations people within foreign policy, at least within Australia, and that's what I'm speaking to here, because every country that has a First Nations population or an indigenous population has a unique story, a unique experience, and a unique relationship with those First Nations, so I don't want to speak beyond the Australian context. But if we're looking at Australia, we've often suffered a lot of exclusion, with regards to policy, and not really been brought in on issues that affect us. If you're talking about climate change, for example, First Nation groups in this country are more likely to be affected by the change in climate and the effects that that has on our environment, our economy, our society. If you look at other issues of foreign policy, whether that be the US army bases in Northern Australia, which are quite close to Indigenous communities, and other such areas of foreign policy, more often than not, they tend to impact First Nations to a greater degree than I think most people give credit to. And so, an inclusion aspect is both about bringing us to the table, to talk as equal stakeholders in the system, but it's also about foregrounding our knowledge and expertise and the different ways of knowing and doing things that we have here, at least in this country, for over 60,000 years. We have unique perspectives and unique ways of doing things that can bring benefit to foreign policy, and can bring benefit to a country's foreign policy. To include that both benefits the country that's doing it, in this case, Australia, but also benefits our own communities, but giving us a say over our own affairs. In terms of feminist foreign policy, you talked earlier around intersectionality, in bringing in other marginalizations and other marginalized groups into that discussion. First Nations in this country are one of the key marginalized groups here, in terms of the history that we've had, with dispossession and discrimination and racism, and exclusion, as I talked about. If we are going to have a feminist foreign policy approach, at least in Australia, you can't really do that without including the voices of First Nations women, who've often been arguing and fighting on these issues for a lot longer, and haven't been acknowledged or thanked, or even recognized in the same way. To really have that inclusive feminist approach that does try and transform structures of power, and change structures of power, doing that involves bringing First Nations to the table, and including us in that discussion, in that dialogue, in that design of policy, to truly change the way that we're thinking about how policy looks, but also how policy's implemented and thought about and discussed in the societal debates around these issues. I think it's important both for the country, obviously, and for my community, because we want a say over our own affairs, we want to have that involvement in policy, because it does impact us, but we also want to see a transformed way of doing things in this country. We could talk about the Uluru Statement From The Heart, and a voice to parliament and what structural change that brings, and why that's important, and why my community very strongly wants that change. But that links into that argument with the feminist foreign policy approach of we want to change these structures to really benefit people in a way that the current systems aren't doing, and in order to do that, we really do need to be integrating what, 60, 80,000 years of First Nations history in this country has really brought to the table. But it doesn't get the kind of air time or focus, or even attention or respect that other approaches get. I think the respect there is the big issue. You can talk about how they're mentioned, but I think it's about respecting First Nations as equal partners in the discussion, but also respecting our approaches and our ontologies and epistemologies as equally valid in the political system, in the foreign policy system. I think a feminist foreign policy approach that does include First Nations is the one that is going most radically and most substantively change structures of power in this country. Around not just foreign policy, but all areas of policy that involve First Nations. I think I'll leave that there. Sorry, I talk really quickly, so I think I've just whizzed through that.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** James, I'm sure I'm going to come back to you. I think also you're drawing the link between the connecting the domestic and the international policy frameworks. I will go to Nalini on this, because a feminist foreign policy actually enables that connection between the domestic and the international policies. And this is an important issue, particularly important in issues like climate change, where domestic inaction of countries like Australia are actually undermining relationships in the region, including obviously in the Pacific. Nalini, how do you see this playing out in the Pacific?

**Nalini Singh:** Thanks, Bettina. Lovely to be in this panel. And a very interesting question indeed. While interactions in the region may be somewhat strained with Australia and the Pacific small island states on the issue of climate change, but when it comes to corporation on strengthening military infrastructure, and playing around with geopolitics, then it's all systems ago. And this is exactly what we are seeing this week in Fiji, with the beginnings of a big military complex being set up in Fiji, called Blackrock. The irony of it all. I have three points, and that was my first one; the fact that, with climate change, there's a lot of conflict and a lot of discussions, but when it comes to, as mentioned earlier, you're talking about military infrastructure, talking about the way geopolitics plays out the role of other countries in the Pacific, then it's a different type of corporation that we see. Second would be we have to remember that the Pacific small island states, what have we been saying, over many years, in terms of the slow and rapid impacts of climate change that we are facing? From frequent, more devastating cyclones from which we are unable to recover from, and we get hit by another one, to complete inundation of some islands. We have such an escalation in the loss of species, whether it is marine species or those on land. We are losing our medicinal plants. We are losing plants that we use to create traditional artifacts. We are losing food. We are seeing invasion from other species coming in, and what does that mean? It means that the loss and damage that we are facing right now, both economic and noneconomic and non-economic, and economic is easy to understand, in terms of the damage we face from disasters, et cetera, and what we put up in terms of adaptation measures with sea walls and all of that. But the non-economic losses, this is significant. We're talking about loss of entire cultures and traditions, and knowledge and language and identity, is very severe. I don't need to repeat it, but I'm going to say it. This comes with the back of we not be the major contributors to what we are facing. Australia is, and continues to be so, so we expect that a feminist foreign policy will be more just to us. And this does not mean cherry-picking on issues to then support when it comes to providing that to the countries in the Pacific. And third would be that climate change has spotlighted that the options for space may also be very constrained for us in the Pacific small island states. As many people in the Pacific small island states rely on subsistence or semi-subsistence livelihoods. And our national economies are very narrowly based on one or two industries, either tourism, and a heavy reliance on foreign aid from our neighboring countries. And this weighs in very heavy in our national budgets. And perhaps the largest contributions are from Australia, not to say that we are not thankful and grateful for the attention, because if that was not the case, then in the last two years, our economies have been ravaged by COVID. What would've happened to the people? We're thankful for that. But at the same time, the Pacific is lagging behind in almost all the gender equality indicators. We have very high rates of gender-based violence. We have increasing poverty, worsening health outcomes for all, including and more so for women, when speaking about sexual and reproductive health and rights. We have a decrease in the quality of education. We have decrease in the quality of employment. That also relates to ways of social security for people. And, as a region, we are at the lowest rank for IPU, in terms of women in leadership. Australia has and is a major donor for initiatives for gender equality, and like I said before, we are very grateful for that, because we are fighting a major battle, whether it is looking at the individual level, and also at the structural levels as well. But we say at the same time that that support should not come from Australia having its own agendas and response responsibilities to the climate change commitments, which at the moment is quite minimal, given what we are facing as a region, in terms of the impacts from climate change. And with Fiji, like I said, we are grateful for the budget support we have received. We have received general budget support, but the question remains, and I'm going to end here, Bettina: where has that gone? With no systems for checks and balances and accountability and interaction, we don't know.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you, Nalini. I'm going to come back to you on those issues of transparency and accountability, because that is also a key tenant of principles of feminist foreign policy. I'm going to go to the role of civil society organization and to you, Chandy. And in that complex, just framing that question: something that we see in feminist foreign policy literature is that, while commitment come from governments, civil society organization play a key role in creating a soft landing ground for these announcements, by raising awareness of the issues and campaigning for actions on gender equality. From your Cambodian perspective, and knowing the work you're doing with ASEAN, could you tell us about that work that you're doing with the ASEAN Women's Caucus to build awareness of feminist foreign policy?

**Chandy Eng:** Thank you so much, Bettina, and good afternoon from Cambodia to all panelists and also participant. Before going to answer the question about what the role of the CSO in ASEAN, as well as in Cambodia, have done with the feminist foreign policy. I would like to reflect again with the definition that shared by Bettina earlier, regarding feminist foreign policy. Feminist foreign policy is an approach which places gender equality as a central goal; a foreign policy in recognition that gender equality is a predictor to peaceful and flourishing society. I'm not sure how many participants in our session today have heard about your own country foreign policy, or those who are coming from ASEAN, Southeast Asian nations, have heard about the foreign policy in ASEAN, in general. If you have heard about this, I would love to hear more from you, so you can just put some of the idea in the chat, so that we can learn more together. Answering to the question regarding the role right now of civil society in ASEAN. The Southeast Asian nation is one of the all regional platform that consists of 10 countries, and right now, Timor L'este is trying to be in. As us in the civil society platform, we include Timor L'este in our advocacy in general. We normally always look at the inequality. The difference between poor or the rich in our own country. But we normally abandon the idea of comparing between the inequality between state, like why inequality between rich and poor has been subject to the global attention, to our attention, but inequality between countries has also continued with just only little attention. Somehow, its connect with our life. For example, if two country have discussion regarding economy together, they might only thinking about the development, but is the inclusive development is in their discussion? We don't know about it. And this is why feminist foreign policy is very important. Talking about ASEAN, there is no such thing calling feminist foreign policy or even foreign policy in one piece yet. We call it blueprint, as the reason of ASEAN for 10 years. Like it doesn't fit in until 2020, 25. In that case, in 2015, the state of ASEAN, they created the 10 year reason that only focusing on economic, not more than that, not much more than economics. So, a group of women representative I think you have heard about them if I say their name, like APWLD, like IRO Asia Pacific, ARO, Southeast Asia Women Caucus and ASEAN, they submitted the 10 year reason of ASEAN. More than what the government is doing, is called ASEAN women's blueprints for alternative regionalism. In that blueprints, we mainstream the principle about feminist foreign policy that Bettina show us earlier. Those are the thing that we come together to promote for that. But unfortunately, the government of the ASEAN state has not really put much attention to that submission from the Southeast Asia Women Caucus on ASEAN. However, it has been eight years already to the 2025. We have not seen much progress about equality. In the blueprint, we mention a lot about addressing inequality, climate justice, economy, social and cultural movement, and also accountability and transparency of the work that ASEAN state should do to address gender equality into the ASEAN state. I would stop from here, but I would leave questions for all of us, discussing maybe among all participants as well, regarding what kind of feminist foreign policy that you can see have been happening, or the principle that have been happening into your country, or even in your region? Thank you.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you, Chandy. Thank you for putting that call to the audience. And just before I go back to other panelists, good opportunity to say, please make sure you put your questions as they come to you in the chat, and then we'll come back to them shortly. Nalini, you've touched on it, Chandy, you've just touched on it, so Nalini, I'm coming back to you, on that question of transparency and accountability, because the importance of the inclusive transparency and accountable policy making in the context of feminist foreign policy is obviously critical. What do you think Australia's approach to the Pacific would need to look like, under our feminist foreign policy?

**Nalini Singh:** That definitely opens up a wishlist, but I will constrain myself to just a few points that I'm able to think of. First one would be certainly not a Big Brother approach, because when it comes to the larger issues on the discussion around climate change, and even looking at the geopolitics, that's the approach that comes forward. And so, we are hoping, certainly it's not that. Second would be not an approach that dictates terms, but works in a much more consultative and collaborative way. Ensuring that given the lack of understanding of gender issues, the entire region needs to work together to help each other out, because that is a fundamental gap, that there is no, should I say leveraging, or no way to say that there is an understanding in terms of the gender issues, or being gender sensitive, in the ways in which we work. If we are collaborative and consultative, then there has to be pathways of developing plans that will help the region understand and move forward to improve on all the gender equality indicators that we are really not doing well. As we said, women need to be on the table. And so, with this approach, we think they can be put on the table. One other is that mainstreaming gender in a transformative way, so that it's just not lip service. And there is ensured ways that, what I was saying earlier, that where we have lack of understanding of gender issues, lack of gender sensitization, then the entire region must come together to understand it. I mean, there are opportunities. The region, remarkably, has a declaration on gender quality. The Pacific Islands Forum has a declaration, which is undergoing a review process. But what does that mean beyond that piece of paper? The review process, I think, has picked up that quite well, but what does it mean? And here we can see that if Australia does move towards it, then that's that opportunity, given that it is one of the major donors in the region for gender equality. Next would be to get away from the gate-keeping attitude and culture that we sometimes see, and be more inclusive. As James was saying, have Indigenous people and everybody, women living with disabilities, young women, women in all their diversities, present on the table, because it's these very people that their lives matter. And we are the ones that should be working towards that, and removing any of obstacles that prevents their participation. Next would be to walk the talk. Start from within, as Bettina, you were saying, and then demonstrate how it can be done with other country partners. Walking the talk becomes very important, and I think in the immediate, as we are seeing with how the climate change discussions and negotiations around commitments is going, that's definitely not it. Again, we cannot have cherry-picking of issues, but we have to all be together in it for the policy to work for everyone. Next would be to look at the benefits of having the policy work for all. Women must be at the consultation tables, at the decision-making tables in meaningful ways. And for that, we must improve on representation of women in all different types of decision-making spheres. It's unfortunate that we are at the lowest rung of the IPU ranking when it comes to that. But we have some improvement, with Samoa, New Zealand. I'm hoping for more women in decision-making places in other countries. And finally, I have to say, yes, I agree with you, Bettina, to have a robust accountability mechanisms where people are able to engage with all the processes, and have whistle blowing elements and remove the fear and intimidation that can stop that from happening, when it comes to actually questioning where is the bilateral aid support going, or questioning the motives behind certain decisions or actions. I would have to say, we have to have it as a people-centered approach. We must have it as with a human rights-based approach, and with everyone, including women, present.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you, Nalini. You're getting comments of support in the chat. I think I want to pick up on, you mentioned this, the inclusiveness being key. As you said, James touched on that earlier, and we're really actually talking about transformative agenda here. And so, yeah, transformation. James, I'm going to come to you. Not just fitting individual women or marginalized group into existing power structures, but actually transforming those structures entirely. What are the priorities for you in transforming Australia's approach to foreign policy, in line with First Nation world views?

**James Blackwell:** Thanks, Bettina. Yeah, look, the first thing is to not do what you just said, which was put various individuals in certain positions, and think that is that way. We've seen a lot of that here in Australia, with regards to First Nations peoples, and we've seen that doesn't really work. I think the first thing we need to do, with regards to foreign policy is to first work out what it is that First Nations communities actually want. What is it that we're looking for? What is it that our values are in this system? What is it that we're looking to get? I can speculate on that. Other academics in my field and other fields can speculate on that. But I think, to really work that out, we do need to go back to community, go back to our communities, and do the research, do the work, and work out what it is that we're looking for as communities, because to give some specific example here, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has an indigenous diplomacy agenda, which speaks to benefit of First Nations people, but they don't necessarily define benefit, and they've not actually asked First Nations what that benefit means. When we're talking about what First Nations want, we really need to work out and ask us, what is it that you're looking for? What transformations do our communities want to see? I think, once we then work that out, we can go about the process of developing those, and changing those around. But I think the first step, in any policy, with regards to First Nations, is around involving us in a way that we do feel heard and seen, and on an equal footing. I think that that's another key thing. Colleague of mine, Julie Balangari talks about this, around we have to come to the table on an equal footing and have the same structural levels of power that the government has, not be tokenized in the way that government currently tokenizes us. I think the second thing is around treating us as significant players in the system. I think that's the other part of the transformation. Beyond just working out what is that we want, also engaging with us as equal players. I touched upon this earlier in the session, about how we need to be respected and acknowledged that our perspectives and our values are on an equal footing and are worth considering. And I think that's one of the things we most want to see within transformation and efforts at transformation, is how is it that not only are they listening to what we want, but are they engaging with us in a way that is respectful and that is productive, and that's not tokenizing our views, not pigeonholing us? I think we have a tendency in Australia to pigeonhole First Nations into the black box, the First Nations box, where that's the little playground we get to play in. And any policy outside of what the government deems important is not really treated serious. I think if we are to engage First Nations on First Nations terms, we need to go and take a wholistic approach to policy, and go, "What is it across the board that we're looking to do?" Not just what is it in the First Nations rights area? Because in Australia, First Nations have been involved very heavily in discussions on First Nations rights and human rights and legal frameworks around UNDRIP and things. We have been heavily involved in that. But beyond that immediate area, we are not necessarily heavily involved. And so, it's about part of that respect, part of that equal footing engagement is around going, "Okay, what is it beyond that we can do? What is it beyond this little circle that we've drawn?" And part of that is engaging us on our own terms. And again, that links back. It's a circular. But it links back to, first, we need to work out what First Nations want, and then we need to actually treat that seriously. I have a thousand reports on this shelf here behind me on different attempts government has made to engage us, that doesn't get read, doesn't get in the enacted. It's about first, we have to engage First Nations. We also have to actually do the work, and treat that engagement seriously, and treat the outcomes of that seriously. And what that process looks like, I think is up for debate and discussion, and amongst my own community, amongst the policy community. But I think the first step is we need to get a voice. And obviously, I'm going to plug Uluru Statement From The Heart again, in terms of how that might be achieved. But again, it's the thing of the first step is a voice, and then we can move on to the structural transformation and the actual change. I think I'll leave that there. I hope that answered the question.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Yes. Thank you, James. I think when you're talking about holistic approach, my mind also goes to the principles around intersectionality. I want to go to Sharanya, because it is clear that intersectionality is a core principle that's coming through the thread of conversation today, and a core principle to feminist foreign policy approaches. Sharanya, how would this impact the way feminist foreign policy should be implemented in a South Asian context, having that intersectionality lens?

**Sharanya Sekaram:** I'm just reflecting so deeply on so many of the things that have been said, which have been so important, and really provided such a strong frame for us to understand how the realities of what feminist foreign policy approaches can mean, not just at high level policy meetings, but really on the ground, for communities who face the brunt and the impact of this. One example I want to give is that, when we talk about intersectionality, it's important to remember a lot of these terms come out of academia, and they come out of Western academia, which means that sometimes the way they're framed doesn't always make sense for regions outside of the global North. And now, for example, in South Asia, a big part of intersectionality actually has less to do with race, and more to do with caste and class, something that's not always factored in when we talk about conflict or when we talk about aid or when we talk about how approaches need to be made. I think this is exactly where the impact of intersectionality, and the impact of having an approach that's rooted in a local and regional context matters, because that's exactly what we need to stop doing. We need to stop copy-pasting approach. I think James said it really well, when he was very specific about the fact that this is an Australian context, that it's a unique framework, it's a unique experience, which it is for so many other regions, as well. Even the experiences of native and Indigenous people vastly vary region to region. For example, in countries like India and in Sri Lanka, you're looking at the Abibasi people, whose persecution has not been the same as it has been in countries like Australia and the United States. And so, I think that's a part of the intersectionality, is to make sure that it's rooted in that local and regional context, and that we cannot keep picking up and copy pasting a frame that belongs to a different context entirely. And then, the last thing I wanted to say on this is it's also important, in regions like South Asia, to understand that how much language plays a role. I noticed a comment in the chat which talked about the difficulty of translating the idea of feminist, or the word feminist in different languages. And I think something I want say there is the problem is that we're often trying to translate words instead of ideas and concepts. And for me, realizing that what we need to be doing is trying to be communicating the concept and the idea, instead of getting really hung up on a word that needs to be used, makes a world of difference in how we communicate this. That is a part of intersectionality also; it's understanding that how the region of South Asia works. I remember having conversations about COVID language with the members of Chittagong Hill communities in Bangladesh, who were saying, "Well, we don't even speak Bangla to begin with, even though everyone's translating into Bangla. And then, what Bangla is translated, we cannot understand, is very academic, very high frequencies, coming from some fancy university." I think it's also about these really, really small things that we just need to go back, rework, and come at it from a local contextualized approach, as opposed to a very high level umbrella approach.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you very much. I think that's very helpful point to be raising, particularly as I want to go to Chandy, and talk about feminist leadership, because you're raising the issue of language, the issues of naming, and the issue of practice. There is a common misconception that feminism, or feminist foreign policy for that matter, is just about women holding leadership roles, in this context of the conversation today, in the foreign policy space. But actually, what we need to see is feminist leadership. GADC has really been putting feminist leadership into practice. Be really keen to hear, Chandy, your experience of that. Can you tell us about your experience of this approach, your feminist leadership?

**Chandy Eng:** Thank you, Bettina. Well, talking about feminist leadership in my own organization, we used to be mocked by many other patriarchy institution who holded power for a very long times, when we told them that we are practicing feminist leadership in our organization, meaning that we are encouraging for equal pay, and also sharing equal power and focusing on the power dynamic into the room that we are working. Then they ask us like, "Do you call it like equality when your management team is 80% female and 20% males?" And then we sit down for around two hours, discussing about it. One word to sum up, it's transforming the status quo that people always believe that men should be the one in the position, all the times. Why you are not questioning the institution that has so many men, more than 80% of men in our parliamentary and only 20% are female? You do not even question it, but you question our organization that are trying to transform that such a status quo. I think this kind of challenging happen everywhere for us who are working for gender equality and gender democracy in our space. One example that we are working in our organization, we just would like to express that the feminist leadership is not putting aside of anyone. We include everyone. We do not leave anyone behind, and in our organization, we also have the network called Men Engagement Network, making sure that men understand about their role, and also their participation to end violence against women and girls, and how can we work together to achieve gender equality. In the feminist leadership, we want to make power dynamic more transparent. It's always to answer the question how we recognize power in the room. How we know when it is projected into us in our role, and most important of all, how we utilize projected power to sell the purpose of our work, and the mission of the organization. This is some question that we put in discussing, and also keep checking about the accountability and transparency of using our power in the feminist leadership organization. This is just some very short example of us using a feminist leadership approach in our organization. Thank you.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you so much. Thank you so much, Chandy. I do have one question. A couple of questions now, that have come into the Q and A. I will go to that, and turn to the panel. The first one I have here is, "How can feminist foreign policy connect with COVID-19 foreign policy to address disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women in the Pacific?" Shall I go to Nalini first?

**Nalini Singh:** Yes. I think all that I mentioned are relevant for this as well. However, what we see, in terms of the impact COVID-19 has had on our economies, has been disproportionate. There have been some countries which had, I would say, an earlier onset in terms of the various waves, like Fiji. We were very fortunate to have the kind of assistance Australia provided to Fiji, in terms of supplying vaccines, because that was seen as the only way out of our situation, and because of our economy, that was really suffering with heavy reliance on tourism, that was seen as the one way through, and together with the majority of the vaccine supplies, we received it from Australia, we have had general general budget support from the Australian government, in terms of the bilateral aid. However, that's wherein I think, if there was a feminist foreign policy in existence, then at least we would have looked at the notions of where that general budget support was going. I would say we do have our gender policies and action plans, and very good initiatives that we are embarking on at the moment. We are next to Australia in terms of developing our national action plan for the prevention of violence against women and girls. We are working with all of ministries and agencies approach to ensure that they start with gender transformation within their ministries, beginning with gender responsive planning and budgeting, and working through making sure that we have data, through perhaps seeing and having our first ever country gender assessment out soon. And a number of other initiatives that has had a lot of support from Australia. What I'm saying is, when we were in the crisis mode, with the severe impacts of COVID on our economies, and the support was coming in, that was great. That was great, but it was more targeted to what was happening in that context. While one can say that we could not predict the way in which the virus would travel across the region and the impacts it would have, but moving on a year on, we could have had many lessons learned, and have improved, so that the countries that are now in the throes of experiencing the variants and the waves, like Vanuatu and the Solomons, I'm wondering what kind of assistance they're getting. Countries like Papua New Guinea, that were almost experiencing really high rates of infection, at the same time, probably, as Fiji. I don't know whether they've had the same type of attention and assistance. This disproportionate way of looking at who is there in your neighborhood, and how that help is coming out, for what reasons, and is it reaching out to everyone? That, I think, would perhaps be looked at if we had a feminist foreign policy in Australia. I don't see most of the countries in the Pacific aligning to that anytime soon, but those would be some of the areas in which it could have helped if we had one, with Australia, at least.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you. Thank you, Nalini. I'll go to another questions, which, for the panelists, you will see in a section called answered. Just accidentally moved it there. "Is there greater potential for South-South feminist policy arrangements, given shared experiences, rather than North-South arrangement, which tend to be more paternalistic?" Can I go maybe Sharanya and Chandy to reflect on this question? Maybe Sharanya first. Yeah.

**Sharanya Sekaram:** Thank you, Bettina. I think that's an excellent question, and a really, really important point that's being raised, because so often, there are so many layers to this also to unpack. Colonization is such a big layer that are always so uncomfortable to college and talk about, but it's a big part of why, when we talk about the flow of aid and how foreign policy and aid flows come through to our regions, how uncomfortable it can be, and the kind of underlying suppressions and oppressions it can bring up. And yes, absolutely, this idea or this concept of South-South support, as opposed to North-South arrangements. How do I frame it? It reinforces existing power hierarchies, existing geopolitical hierarchies, and existing discomforts. But also, beyond that, I think also, what comes out of South-South arrangements is that many of us have shared histories. We have shared cultures, we have shared similarities in the way our societies are structured, and our ways of existing and organizing have existed and are functioning. I think that is a big part of relationship building, and a big part of support that doesn't often always get acknowledged, because our trajectories have been very similar in what we have dealt with and what we continue to deal with. And that's something South-South can bring out that North-South really is unable to.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Chandy, I'm going to call on you to add to this. Thank you.

**Chandy Eng:** I think Sharanya has responded very great already to this question. I just would like to add just one point that Nalini also mentioned about the differences. Normally, we work for the feminist foreign policy. One of the thing that we need to put in mind is first recognize, respect, and respond to the differences. I know that, if we have the South-South feminist foreign policy arrangement, that idea can answer greatly to the issue that happening into the regions better than if we talk about North or South arrangement, which just only the acting.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you, Chandy. We have one more question, and I'd like to go to actually Priyanka from the Kubernein Initiative on that question. I'll read out the question. "How do we engage in and push for feminist foreign policies in countries that do not uphold international obligations to gender equality they have already committed to? Are there particular initiatives that need to be normalized, i.e., gender responsive budgeting and mainstreaming, to allow for people towards feminist foreign policy? What are the tools we need as organizations activists to push for this?" You're on mute, Priyanka. Yeah.

**Priyanka Bhide:** Thank you, Bettina. I think I will also tie this to your previous question and also what Sharanya said, in terms of having a very country-specific context. And even within the South, countries come from such diverse context, so I think it's important for us to have the civil society engagement within civil society itself, where we understand each other and share these perspectives, to start a conversation from within the countries, and the existing structures, because it's very important, at least, and I can only speak from our experience here, to be able to work given the existing institutions, because there are people already doing good work. It's important to understand what is already happening, and then root to your perspective within that existing system, because otherwise then, it has to be something that is disruptive enough for the system to handle. That would be my take on it.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you, Priyanka. Anyone else from the panel wanted to add to this? I'm seeing. Okay, so I'm going to put another question to the panel. Chandy, you did raise your hand.

**Chandy Eng:** Yeah, I think I would like to quote what Nalini have mentioned earlier, regarding this question also. I think similar, the answer saying we all together need to do it. Not individual state that already against or cannot fulfill their commitment regarding using the feminist foreign policy into their gender equality work. We have to work together. It meant other state have to be the one who watch above. Every years in the world is the universal period review for the state every four years. Each state give the recommendations for other states, but after giving the recommendation already, they just like, "Huh, it's okay. I already give my recommendation. You do or not, it's none of my business," and that's not going to work. So, one of the thing that we can do to make sure that the other country is keeping their promise or commitment on the paper, to work and to implement it in the real implementation, not like lip service, and then walk the talk, as Nalini mentions. We need the check-in from the other state too. Yeah, I think each of us have that power to hold each other accountability, not focusing on your country alone, but also to your neighbor, and also to the other country too. Thank you.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Nalini?

**Nalini Singh:** Yes, I just wanted to add to the discussion around the South-South and North-South. I was just thinking about when you presented the timeline with the number of countries that already have feminist foreign policies, you see the majority is global North, or they are from global North. And of course, it's because they have their big development aid agencies that have been doing this work for a very long time, and finally realizing that they need to change the way. And the fact that this shift is coming from the women's movement, it's coming from the feminist movement, which should never be forgotten, and that is pushing it. Now, this is now linking to another point that I want to make, is that imagine if, in our countries, I'm talking about our global South countries, if people were aware and we had the opportunities to participate. And I know it's not possible, from India down to my country, Fiji, to be designing a policy for our countries in this nature. But imagine if our governments knew that people would back them and support them when they would also, at that same table with the global North donors, be there with leveraging power to say, "Yes, that's very great, you're giving all of this, but how about considering all the other things that are also on the table?" I'm thinking about, in the sense of geopolitics, shifting the power on the table at that level. And so in that way, I'm very, very glad to have countries like Mexico and Chile getting on this path, because it's important. We see how Mexico is, in terms of fighting for the gender issues when it comes to COP and the commitments that are coming out of COP. And I think a great contribution is from the feminist movement, the women's movement, which is there to support them to say, "We are here as well." It's one thing to be sitting as passive recipients on the table, and another thing to be behaving in a way, in terms of leveraging that power dynamics a little bit, not to the detriment, in terms of when it comes to looking at power politics entirely, but to ensuring that it's people-centered, and we must keep that there. I was just thinking around how and what it would mean if more global South countries start doing this and what kind of shifts we are going to get into the dead spaces, in terms of decision-making and negotiations that unfortunately some of our UN spaces have become. How dynamically that could change. And so, I see potential, but that timeframe is going to be very long, in my opinion, if we even start putting the potential countries on it. That's all that I have to say. Thanks, Bettina.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you. Thank you, Nalini. We have nine minutes left. I'm going to put one more question to the whole panel, and you'll have one minute to give your thoughts. Common concern about feminist foreign policy is that the word feminist is seen as a Western construct. We've touched on this. In many parts of the region. While we know that feminist foreign policy should be something that guides a country's own approach, rather than something that is forced upon others, if we're going to see countries in the Indo-Pacific region taking up this approach, it will be important to make it relevant to the context of the region. My question is, can I ask each of you to share one idea for what you would change, or what you would add to current feminist foreign policy approaches, to make them relevant to our region? I don't want to put anyone on the spot, so I'm going to let you jump in. I'll know from unmuting.

**Sharanya Sekaram:** I'm happy to jump in here and say I think the one thing that has to happen is that it has to be led by women and girl-led organizations or feminist groups from the country. They should be at the center. They should be leading it, the approaches, the work, and right down from design of the approach and not just at the implementation stage.

**Bettina Baldeschi**: Thank you.

**James Blackwell:** If I can jump in, I think, just to second that and say it needs to be led by the unique approaches and different cultural backgrounds of each country. If you look at Australia, you want to be including First Nations people, looking at other countries you want to be making it specific and focused on individual nations, and their experiences, and what they're looking to get out of it. That's all I'd add.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you, James.

**Chandy Eng:** Not so different from James. Individually and respect the differences is one of the key thing for that approach, too. And just remember that solidarity is not uniformity. We are doing thing for the same goal of gender equality, but we can do it in different method, different ways, because we have different culture and also different way to address it. The way that you are doing may not work in our regions, but it may be a very good example, so we can do it in different ways. Solidarity is not uniformity for making the feminist foreign policy approach work in each region. Thank you.

**Nalini Singh:** Maybe I'm going to take a bit of a drastic approach in here and say, why not? Why is there such a visceral reaction to the word feminist? When you break it down and we have done that, we know what it actually means. To me as a feminist, I have to claim the word and use it, and I have to do my best to educate everyone around what that word means, and why is it important to have it in there? But the reactions that we get when we do say the word is something that will take a bit of time to move across, as will these conversations, because we are not expecting such policies to be developed next year or so. It should take time. And with this, I see an opportunity to break down all those barriers, to name patriarchy, and to actually break down all the structural and innate barriers that have been in existence for so long. Taking that as an opportunity, I would say, I would still stick to the word.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you, Nalini. Look, I think something that stands out for me from this discussion is that feminist foreign policy, as we said, is a framework, but it's framework that prompts us to ask different questions. And that includes asking questions from the standpoint of the most marginalized, excluded. It helps move us beyond the questions of including women in foreign policy, which we touched on, pushes us to intersectional approaches, which we've heard from each of our panelists, in ways that challenge the very structure of foreign policy. We've heard a lot in today around actually transformation, and dismantling power structure, transforming structures of power. We're not just putting different people at the same table. We're completely re-imagining what the table looks like. I do really want to thank all our panelists, and I want to thank all the people who have joined us today. I would like to hand over to Priyanka from the Kubernein Initiative for some closing words for our session today. Thank you.

**Priyanka Bhide:** Thank you very much, Bettina. I will not take too much time. What I have done is we've had some fantastic insights from our panelists, and I have written down some of the words and phrases that jumped up at me at the end of this conversation. And I'm just going to leave us with those words and phrases: balancing internal and external; transforming systems, structures, and institutions; transforming status quo; checks and balances; inclusive; a holistic approach, a holistic voice; intersectionality rooted in local and regional context; language, the importance to ideas; transparent power dynamics; recognize, respect, and respond. These were some of the words that had just jumped at me through our conversation. It was a very insightful discussion. Thank you very much to all of our panelists and to IWDA and the Kubernein team as well, who's at the back end, working hard at making this possible. Thank you.

**Bettina Baldeschi:** Thank you so much, everyone.